



March 21, 2013

Via Electronic Submission

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., SW, Room TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Ex Parte Communication
WC Docket No. 11-42**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

As a Lifeline service provider and a major contributor to the Universal Service Fund (USF), Sprint recognizes both the importance of existing rules to maintain the financial viability of the USF and the value of the Lifeline program to eligible Lifeline customers. Sprint firmly supports efforts to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse in the Lifeline program. However, these efforts should not overshadow the benefits of this program. Consider, for example, the case of two Assurance Wireless customers for whom the Lifeline program has literally been a lifeline:

- E.M., a single father of two children, one of them with special needs. After being laid off from his highly paid job with an engineering firm, E.M. worked at a series of jobs (at McDonalds, Target, painting houses, etc.) to try to support himself and his family. His landline and mobile phone service were eventually turned off, leaving him with no way to communicate with his children's doctors and caregivers, and no way for prospective employers to reach him. He qualified for and received Assurance Wireless Lifeline service, and a few weeks later secured a job.

E.M. has stated that "I was unemployed for an extended amount of time due to layoffs. The phone and service I received from Assurance Wireless were invaluable to my finding new employment and to my efforts to recover from this recession. It allowed me to contact potential employers and provide a way for them to respond to me, while also saving money. Assurance also gave me peace of mind that I had a way to stay connected to my kids while away from home."

- K.H., whose family experienced major financial and emotional stress when her husband was hospitalized and in a long-term coma, and she lost her job. She qualified for and received Lifeline service, and used her basic Assurance Wireless phone to communicate with the hospital, family and friends. K.H. stated that the Lifeline service "gave me one less thing to worry about in the most stressful time of my life," and "freed me up to concentrate my time and energy on helping my husband recover."

Sprint believes that the experiences of these two consumers are not atypical of a large number of end users who have or do participate in the Lifeline program. As our Nation continues to recover

from a painful economic recession, the Lifeline program will continue to be a small (a \$9.25 per month per household benefit) but important safety net for the neediest Americans.

Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's Rules, a copy of this letter is being filed electronically in the above-referenced docket. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (703) 433-4503.

Sincerely,

/s/ Norina T. Moy

Norina T. Moy
Director, Government Affairs

c: K. Scardino, FCC
J. Lechter, FCC